

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

that the mind has no other movement save in Me. Although mortal, she tastes the bliss of the immortals, and, although still with the weight of the body, she receives the joy of the spirit; whereby oftentimes the body is lifted up from the earth through the perfect union that the soul has made in Me, as though the heavy body had become light. It is not that its weight is taken from it; but, because the union which the soul has made in Me is more perfect than that between her and the body, therefore the strength of the spirit united to Me raises the weight of the body from the earth, and the body remains motionless, all fordone by the affection of the soul, so that (as thou mayest remember to have heard from some creatures) it would not be possible to live, unless My goodness girded it round with strength. Therefore, I would have thee know that it is a greater miracle to see the soul not leave the body in this union, than to see many dead bodies raised up again. And for this, I, for a while, withdraw this union, making her return to the vessel of her body ; that is, the bodily sense, which was totally alienated through the affection of the soul, return to consciousness ; because it is not that the soul departs from the body, for this she does not, save by means of death, but the faculties depart because of the affection of the soul which is united to Me by love. Then is the memory found full of nought but Me ; the understanding uplifted to contemplate My truth as object ; the will, that follows the understanding, loves and unites itself to what the eye of the understanding sees. All these powers being gathered and united together, immersed and drowned in Me, the body loses its feeling ; the eye, seeing, sees not; the ear, hearing, hears not ; the tongue, speaking, speaks not, save as sometimes I permit to relieve the abundance of the heart, and for the glory and praise of My name; the hand, touching, does not touch ; the feet, going, do not go. All the members are bound and occupied by the bond and by the consciousness of love. By this bond they are subjected to reason and united with the affection of the soul, and, as it were against their own nature, all cry together to Me, the eternal Father, that they would fain be separated from the soul and the soul from the body; and, therefore,